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ABSTRACT

Identity and diversity in all its forms present major challenges to countries seeking to best equip citizens with the skills to participate effectively in their diverse societies. This investigation into citizenship education in Trinidad and Tobago produced information about: the type, nature, and variety of programs being offered; the topics covered in these programs; the approaches and methodologies being used; and the groups that participate in the programs. It also highlighted the fact that government and civil society organizations are involved in citizenship education. Additionally, the investigation provided opportunities for individuals and organizations to identify the challenges of being a citizen in the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious society of Trinidad and Tobago. Participation in the search conference which collected information for the study, provided opportunities for individuals and organizations to share concerns about their work. Primary data were collected in a questionnaire given to organizations in the sample, in meetings, and in face-to-face and telephone interviews. Among the concerns and issues identified and discussed were: values, identity, difference and diversity, inequalities; citizenship and the good citizen; democracy and governance; the socio-economic situation and its impact on citizens; the ideology and structure of the education system; and the content, delivery evaluation and impact of citizenship education programs. A list of participants at the Search Conference is appended. (BT)

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Commonwealth Case Studies in Citizenship Education

ED 480 423

Citizenship Education in Small States

Trinidad and Tobago

by Patricia Ellis PhD

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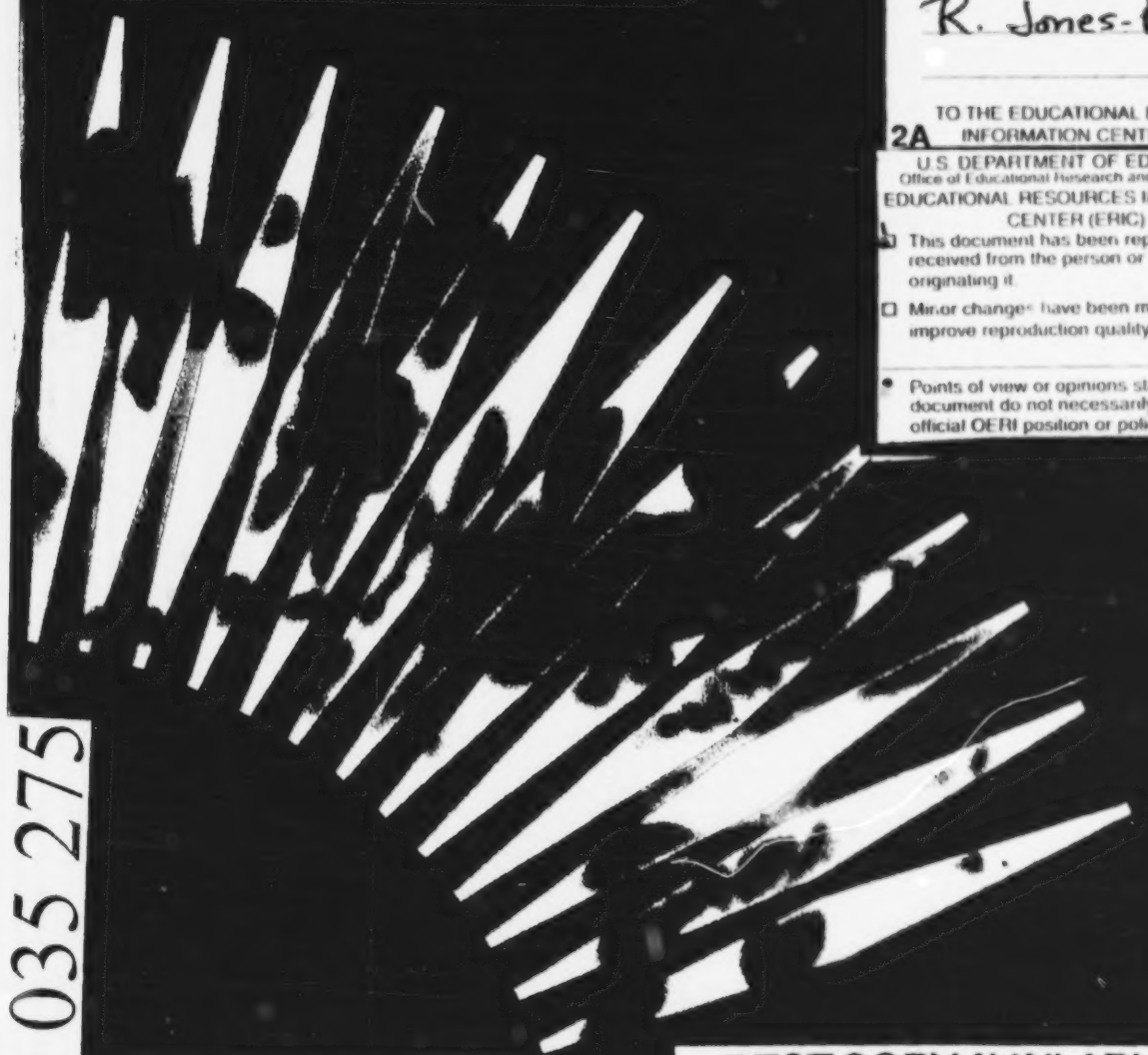

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Commonwealth Secretariat
in collaboration with the Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago

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in Small States:

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Executive Summary

The investigation into citizenship education in Trinidad and Tobago produced information about:

- the type, nature and variety of programmes being offered
- the topics covered in these programmes
- the approaches and methodologies being used
- the various groups that participate in the programmes.

It also highlighted the fact that both government and civil society organisations are involved in citizenship education.

More than producing information, however, the investigation provided opportunities for individuals and organisations to identify some of the challenges of being a citizen in the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious society that is Trinidad and Tobago. Participation in the search conference provided opportunities for individuals and organisations to share information about their work in this field, to find out about and learn about what others were doing. It also allowed them to share their concerns and to identify and discuss issues that are related to citizenship, to individuals as citizens, to the society as a whole and to citizenship education programmes.

Among the concerns and issues identified and discussed were:

- values, identity, difference and diversity, inequalities
- citizenship and the good citizen
- democracy and governance
- the socio-economic situation and its impact on citizens
- the ideology and structure of the education system, and
- the content, delivery evaluation and impact of citizenship education programmes.

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Participants at the search conference also suggested a number of actions that need to be taken and activities that should be undertaken to address the issues that were identified, to promote unity in diversity and to create citizens committed to practise good citizenship.

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Introduction

The Harare Declaration, signed by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting in 1991, set out key principles and values to which Commonwealth countries should adhere, identified strategies for promoting peace, sustainable development, alleviation of poverty, and agreed to support small states in their efforts to overcome their problems. At their meeting in New Zealand in 1995, they also pledged to support democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedom. In 2000 at their meeting in Halifax, Commonwealth Ministers of Education agreed, among other things, that education should be used to promote values of democracy, human rights, citizenship and good governance.

The project on Citizenship Education in Small States is one of the follow-up activities being undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat in response to a mandate from Commonwealth Heads of Government and Ministers of Education. It is one component of the Secretariat's education programme that focuses on values education and that is examining ways in which values are transmitted.

The project is being carried out in different parts of the Commonwealth. Two of the countries, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, are in the Caribbean and the others are various countries in Southern Africa. All have populations that comprise different ethnic groups with different cultural heritages and different religious affiliations. Identity and diversity are major issues that face the citizens and that present major challenges to policy-makers as they seek to manage and maintain a society in which citizens can live in peace and harmony, and develop their full creative potential.

It is hoped that the outcome of this project will provide valuable insights and useful lessons to inform policy and programmes in citizenship education, to transmit, strengthen and reinforce "Commonwealth values" and to empower and equip Commonwealth citizens to face successfully the challenges of living and participating effectively in their diverse societies.

Chapter 1: The Context

The twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago has a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-religious society. The population comprises persons of East Indian descent (40.3 per cent), of African descent (39.6 per cent), of mixed race (18 per cent), of small numbers of Chinese, Syrian-Lebanese and Caucasians and nearly half (46 per cent) of the population is under 25 years of age. Citizens belong to and follow the teachings of Christian as well as non-Christian religions and there are holidays to celebrate holy days of each religion. The religion, heritage and culture of each group is recognised by public holidays, celebrations and festivals such as Indian Arrival Day, Emancipation Day, Shouter Baptist Day, Easter, Diwali and Eid. Individuals from all ethnic groups participate in all of these religious and cultural events and in Carnival, the most well-known national festival.

While many individuals live in peace and harmony with their neighbours, there are racial tensions and to some extent the country is divided along racial lines. This is especially evident in politics, as can be seen in the present election results in which the two main political parties, one predominately African, the other predominately Indian, both obtained the same number of seats. This political impasse is having serious implications for government and governance. It has raised questions about the validity of the political process, about national and political leadership, about the messages being sent to citizens by current leaders, about citizen's participation in and response to the current crisis, about the long-term impact on citizens and the consequences for the country.

Trinidad and Tobago has an oil-based economy and, according to a World Bank study, (Poverty and Unemployment in an Oil Based Economy, 1995), 18.2 per cent of the labour force was unemployed, 21 per cent of the population was poor and about 50 per cent of these were extremely poor. Unemployment is particularly high among the youth and about 40 per cent of those between 15-19 years old and 25 per cent of those between 20-24 years are unemployed. Within the last few years there has been the emergence of "the new Poor", accounting for about 35 per cent of the population.

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A recent find of new offshore oil deposits, the largest in 30 years, has the potential to usher in another period of boom, to increase revenue and foreign exchange earnings to make more money available for social programmes to alleviate poverty; and, if allowed to filter down, to improve the standard of living for many. However, as in many countries wealth is often concentrated in the hands of a small number of citizens. The recent emergence of a group of businessmen calling themselves the Patriarchs who, according to one participant, "are committed to seeing that the money does not trickle down", will influence and determine the ways in which the national income will be used and which groups in the society will benefit most from it.

Citizens at all levels of the society are being faced with a number of social problems. Some people believe that unemployment, poverty, and an emphasis on materialistic values are contributing to a great deal of immorality and corruption, to an increase in violence and an escalation in crime. Indiscipline among children, students and young people is growing, there is an increase of violence and crime in schools, and in abuse of and violence against women and children. These behaviours were seen as a reflection of the type of citizen that exists and that is being developed, and as issues that needed to be addressed in citizenship education programmes.

The Education Policy Paper (1993-2003) indicates a commitment to provide opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their gender, class, culture or ethnic origin to develop to their full potential. This commitment is informed by a philosophy of equity and equality, and emphasises the centrality of ethical and moral values. It indicates that values education, including multi-cultural sensitivities, religious understanding and aesthetic development, is not only a goal, but a fundamental element in the curriculum. The policy paper also indicates that the development and implementation of teaching-learning strategies that address the psychological and social challenges faced by adolescents in secondary schools is one of the strategies for achieving curriculum goals (National Task Force of Education: White Paper, 1993-2003).

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While the intentions outlined in the policy paper are laudable, there have been serious challenges in translating policy into action. This was revealed in the National Human Development Report for 2001 in which it is reported that the education system is not adequately meeting the special needs of vulnerable groups (Youth at Risk: Trinidad and Tobago National Human Development Report 2000, UNDP, Port of Spain 2001). This failure of the education system to meet the needs of different groups in the society directly affects their ability to be productive citizens with the ability to function effectively in their society.

The population in secondary schools is made up of children from all ethnic groups in the society and of more females (51.2 per cent) than males (48.8 per cent). "A study of the Secondary School Population in Trinidad and Tobago: Placement Patterns and Practices" undertaken in 1992-1993, provides information about and insights into how male and female students from different ethnic groups participate in, perform and benefit from the education system. For example, there is a significant difference in how students from different ethnic groups perform in the eleven-plus examination, and the data show that the performance of students of African descent was significantly lower than that of all other ethnic groups, and that that of white students was significantly higher than those of students of mixed race and of Indian descent.

Race Distribution Throughout Secondary Schools

Race	Percentage of School Population
African	34.4
Chinese	0.5
Indian	36.75
Mixed	26.9
Syrian-Lebanese	0.2
White	0.9
Other	0.4

Source: Research Report of a study of the Secondary school Population, pg 44. Centre for Ethnic studies, UWI, St Augustine 1994

There is also evidence that the gap between students of different ethnic groups widens at the secondary and tertiary levels, that the drop-out rate is about 18.5 per cent and that significant numbers of young people who should be are not in school. Among the latter are 56 per cent males and 58 per cent females of African descent, 47 per cent of males and females of Indian descent, and 44 per cent males and 29 per cent females of mixed race (Study of Secondary School Population, pg 71).

A few years ago the previous government introduced universal secondary education and to facilitate this it implemented the Secondary Education Modernisation Project (SEMP). As a result, a large number of children from socio-economic backgrounds who had formerly been excluded now have the opportunity to benefit from secondary education. It also abolished corporal punishment in schools. These initiatives have, however, resulted in more diversity in the classroom, have focused attention on indiscipline in schools and are forcing teachers to find alternative ways to punish and discipline students. They have also led to greater emphasis on issues like equality, equity, and justice, that are essential to good citizenship.

However, because the ideology and the traditional structure of the school system have not changed and continue to be geared to cognitive learning, and to emphasising teacher specialisation, interest in subjects relating to human emotions are given low priority and do not attract much interest among either teachers or students. The challenge is to reconstruct structures and systems that truly empower and emancipate.

During the discussion on the various political, economic and social aspects of the culture, participants in the discussions agreed that the present environment offers an opportunity for civic action and for intervention by civic groups to fill the gap created by the failure of the State to solve adequately and successfully society's problems.

It is within this context that citizenship education programmes are being developed and implemented in schools and communities, and it is against this background that the present study was conducted.

Chapter 2: The Study

Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

- to assess what constitutes citizenship education
- to identify agencies and organisations involved in citizenship education and to provide an opportunity for them to share and discuss their work
- to identify and describe the type and number of citizenship programmes that are being offered, and the approaches, methodologies and materials that are being used in them
- to identify the emerging themes, trends and issues
- to agree on an Action Agenda for the way forward.

Approach and Methodology

A "Search Conference Methodology" was used to collect information from providers of citizenship education programmes, to give them the opportunity to share information on their work, and to agree on an action plan for the future development and expansion of citizenship education. The study was implemented in two phases. In phase one, information was collected from a sample of providers. The sample included individuals from the Ministry of Education and from NGOs. The main activity in phase two was a one-day workshop to which those who were interviewed, as well as others involved in citizenship education were invited.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected in a questionnaire given to organisations in the sample, in meetings, and in face-to-face and telephone interviews with a number of individuals from the Ministry of Education, from schools and from NGOs. Together these yielded a significant amount of information on programmes that included aspects of citizenship education, identified the constraints and challenges faced in delivering them, highlighted issues that needed to be addressed and revealed the respondents' views and opinions

about citizenship and citizenship education. Secondary data were collected from a number of documents (see Appendix 1) that provided information about the topics covered and the activities undertaken in citizenship education programmes and projects, as well as about the providers.

The Search Conference

Phase Two of the Search Conference brought together individuals and organisations engaged in citizenship education, allowed them to share information about their programmes, to identify and discuss strategies for co-operation and collaboration, and to agree an Action Agenda for the future development, expansion and implementation of citizenship education.

During the morning session, presentations were made by four persons from the Ministry of Education, by the Secretary General of the National Commission for UNESCO, and by representatives of the Inter-Religious Organisation, the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Emancipation Support Committee, SERVOL, the Oilfield Workers' Trade Union, and the National Baha'i Centre, and by the Tutor of the UWI School of Continuing Studies. In addition to providing information about their programmes, the presenters raised a number of issues that in their view needed to be addressed in citizenship education programmes.

The afternoon session took the form of a small group discussion in which seven persons participated. While this number was considerably smaller than was anticipated and planned for, it did have some advantages as it allowed for a great deal of in-depth discussion of the present environment, of key

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issues, and on some of the gaps that need to be filled. Although most of the time was spent on the social dimension and on the many social problems facing citizens, there was also some discussion on the political and economic issues and on their impact on the citizenry.

Feedback from participants indicated that the Conference was a success, that they found it to be a very impressive forum for dialogue and information sharing, they learnt a lot about what was being done in citizenship programmes, it provided an opportunity for them to reflect on their work in citizenship education, and it motivated them to continue.

Constraints and Limitations

The main constraint in undertaking the study was time. The amount of time allocated for data collection did not allow for the investigation to collect information from schools, to interact with students or to get their views about citizenship and citizenship education programmes. This was a major limitation as the latter would have given some insights into the outcomes, effect and impact of some of the existing programmes. In addition, interacting with and getting information from the schools and students would also have provided different perspectives from the younger generation that would have given a more balanced view about the citizenship education programmes that are being offered.

In spite of this, the study did produce a great deal of information and many valuable insights, although several persons were sceptical about whether "anything will come out of it".

Chapter 3: Citizenship Education

Information collected on questionnaires and from interviews, and presentations at the Search Conference, clearly shows that different aspects of citizenship education are being dealt with in a number of ways in many different programmes, and that citizenship education is being provided by government institutions, especially by the Ministry of Education, and by several civic organisations. At the same time, while each of the providers has a slightly different definition of what citizenship education is, all of the definitions given by them include core values that must be accepted by all citizens.

What is Citizenship Education?

Responses to this question came from those who completed the questionnaire and from the individuals who participated in the small group discussion at the Search Conference. Below are some examples of the definitions suggested.

Citizenship education is the application and practice of educational strategies by which individuals develop values, attitudes, habits, and skills that will enable them to be informed, productive, responsible and active citizens of their communities and society. (Curriculum Coordinator, Ministry of Education)

Citizenship education is an attempt to inform and educate the general public about the responsibilities of being a good citizen and by extension how good citizenship impacts on the success or failure of the nation. (SERVOL)

Citizenship education involves preparing people to dwell peacefully and respectfully with each other and to recognise that the role of each ethnic and cultural group contributes to the advancement and development of the nation. (Teacher's Union)

Citizenship education is universal, global and holistic. It provides opportunities to develop and understand the value of moral character, dignity and self-worth; to understand and accept attitudes and behaviour that are based on respecting inclusive inter-relationships; and the acceptance that every individual is important regardless of their geographical, political or social status. It stresses individual discipline,

responsibility and a commitment to promote the advancement of self, society and the welfare of humanity. (The Baha'i)

Citizenship education is more than a technical or tactical curriculum subject or activity, it is a more fundamental strategic approach towards cultivating a critical disposition, awareness of and sensitivity to the human condition to include what one wants for oneself as well as for the "other". (Small group at Search Conference)

These definitions together include essential elements of citizenship education, and suggest that citizenship education programmes should be based on some universally accepted core values, such as:

- equipping people with the skills to become responsible and active citizens
- promoting an understanding and tolerance of all ethnic groups, and encouraging the integration and working together of those groups
- promoting a desire for citizens to achieve their full potential, both for their own self-esteem and for the benefit of their nation,

as well as values that are of particular relevance to Trinidad and Tobago.

Aims of Citizenship Education

It was also suggested that citizenship education programmes should aim to:

- equip students to function in a democratic society, and to respect the rights and property of others
- teach students how to resolve differences and how to manage conflict
- teach them how to live peacefully and harmoniously in a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious society.
- weld the society together by breaking down traditional values of prejudice and ignorance
- truly emancipate and create citizens who are empowered to change their lives through an holistic approach to their spiritual, physical, intellectual, creative, emotional and social development

- ensure that according to our national anthem "every creed and race find an equal place" to participate and build the country and to understand that they all have to do this together.

The Content of Citizenship Education Programmes

According to all of those who participated, education should be seen as a strategy for enabling individuals to become good citizens and citizenship education programmes should include:

- core, universal values like respect, responsibility, equal rights and opportunities for all regardless of difference
- values that are specific and related to Trinidad and Tobago and its unique environment and context, such as inclusiveness, tolerance, recognition and acceptance of the role of different ethnic and cultural and religious groups in the society
- the concept and characteristics of a "good citizen" with desirable values, attitudes, habits and behaviours, and who is disciplined, informed, responsible, committed, proactive and actively involved in the advancement and development of their society
- the importance of dignity and self-worth of the individual and of their awareness of and sensitivity to the human condition, and an understanding of the link between the development of the individual and their social responsibility and nationhood.
- ensure that according to our national anthem "every creed and race find an equal place" to participate and build our country and to understand that we all have to do this together.

An examination of some of the citizenship education programmes being offered did provide some idea as to whether and to what extent these aims are being achieved and whether the curriculum is covering the topics and issues identified.

Providers of Citizenship Education

Citizenship education is being provided by government agencies, mainly by the Ministry of Education and by several NGOs.

The Ministry of Education provides formal and non-formal education programmes in citizenship education. The former are done within the formal education system and more specifically within the Social Studies curriculum. The Curriculum Department is responsible for designing the Social Studies curriculum and for including topics that are deemed to be important for creating good citizens. The Division of Educational Services through its various units adapts and produces new curricula, prepares and produces print and audio-visual instructional materials, including materials for use in programmes broadcast over the electronic media to schools and adult learning centres. It also supervises the school library service and adult education programmes offered in 64 Lifelong Learning Centres and is involved, often in collaboration with NGOs, in developing and implementing non-formal education programmes that focus on various aspects of citizenship.

The National Commission for UNESCO has implemented several citizenship programmes and projects in a number of schools, and has facilitated the formation of UNESCO Clubs and the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), in 50 schools. It produces materials and disseminates information on Human Rights education and other topics related to citizenship education.

Non-Governmental Organisations are deeply involved in citizenship education and offer a wide variety of non-formal education programmes to some schools, as well as to specific groups and to the wider society. There are a large number of civil society organisations in Trinidad and Tobago and while the majority of these may deal with citizenship education in some of their programmes, there are those that have developed and implemented programmes and activities that deal specifically with citizenship education. In some of these cases the activities grew out of their concern with issues affecting a particular group of citizens and in others their specific focus is on

creating good citizens. Among the NGO providing citizenship education are religious groups, women's groups, cultural groups, trade unions, and activist groups. Their programmes have a double focus, to sensitise and educate individuals and particular groups about their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and to educate communities about issues that are of concern to the citizenry and to help individuals to embrace values, develop attitudes and adopt behaviours that will enable them to be "good" citizens.

The University of the West Indies. The School of Education in the Faculty of Humanities and Education does not have an extensive programme in citizenship education and, according to the Head of the Department, this is a neglected area. In spite of this some aspects of the subject are covered in a few courses including the teaching of Social Studies, the social Philosophy of Schooling in and in Foundation and Philosophy courses within the Masters of Education programmes.

Formal Programmes

Within the formal education system different aspects of citizenship education are included in the Social Studies curricula for primary and secondary schools, in Family Life Education programmes and in Moral and Values Education programmes.

The Social Studies Syllabus

The primary school syllabus in Social Studies is designed to help children become more aware of and understand their role in the family and to understand how to become productive, honest, loyal and productive citizens. It includes topics like my family, my neighbourhood, my community, the historical development of our nation, national celebrations and festivals, how we govern ourselves, and outstanding personalities.

The Social Studies syllabus for the first three forms in secondary schools is intended to increase students' understanding and appreciation of the constitution, the structure, function and evolution of government, human rights and the rights of the Child, and rights and responsibilities of citizens.

In addition, students are encouraged to discuss national and religious celebrations and festivals. Also included in the new curriculum for Form 1 is a module entitled "*Citizenship: How Your Political and Social World* is Organised".

Within the new Secondary Education Modernisation Project (SEMP), there is a new curriculum on citizenship, the goals of which are to increase students' understanding of the principles and practices of democracy and the importance of protecting and preserving the environment, and to provide them with opportunities that would increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. In addition, within the curriculum for the National Certificate in Secondary Education that is being piloted in 25 schools, there are modules on the rights of the child and on the attitudes of teachers.

The Social Studies Syllabus of the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), for students in the upper forms of secondary school, draws students' attention to some particular aspects of citizenship education including social participation, sensitivity to values and a sense of commitment to the community.

Moral and Values Education

Moral and values education is regarded by the Ministry of Education as being so important that one of the Curriculum Officers has been given responsibility for developing, implementing and evaluating a moral and values education project. The first activity in the project was a survey the findings of which indicated that some form of values education was being done in most schools, but that there were gaps. A framework for moral and values education was developed and a programme is being designed to infuse values into the school system and to create "Values Promoting Schools". The programme focuses on secondary schools and is intended to help teachers to create an environment that will encourage and foster desirable values, to formulate policies and practices that reflect higher values and to provide opportunities for everyone in the school – teachers, students and administrative staff – to discuss and debate values. The idea is to infuse values into all aspects of school life and into all processes by using all possible

"paths" including subjects, teaching methods, school assembly, games periods, religious occasions, school administration, discipline, and form periods.

To promote values education and to encourage and equip teachers to teach it, training sessions and workshops for teachers are conducted on a regular basis. A three-day orientation workshop was held in 2001 for 370 teachers, and since then several workshops and short sessions continue to be organised for teachers. In addition, a significant amount of teaching and resource materials are being produced including handbooks prepared by officers in the Ministry and by teachers themselves. Materials prepared and produced by NGOs like the Baha'i are also available for use in schools.

The Schools Broadcasting Unit has also developed modules on Morals and Values Education for infants, juniors and seniors. The module for infants includes topics on peace, love and respect, and the one for juniors and seniors includes topics on morality, responsibility and honesty. Other topics include who is a citizen, the importance and value of rules and regulations, rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the value of co-operation and of working together.

UNESCO Programmes

Programmes implemented by UNESCO in schools include:

- ***Creating a Culture of Peace***. Within this programme is a project entitled Changing the Culture of the Classroom. One hundred teachers and administrators participated in the project which included an innovative training programme to train teachers in how to create nurturing classrooms in which children can learn peaceful ways of handling conflict and can develop all aspects of their humanity. Innovative and creative approaches were used, including drama to highlight and stimulate discussion on classroom situations, to understand the reason for anger and to learn how to control it, to identify alternative ways of punishing students and of encouraging them to change their behaviour, and to learn how to use praise to reinforce good behaviour.

- ***The Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet)*** is a worldwide project in which 55 schools in Trinidad and Tobago participate. Two activities being undertaken by the schools are The Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project and the World Heritage in Young Hands Project. In the former students learn about the slave trade, its causes, consequences and legacies and in the latter they learn the importance of maintaining and preserving their natural and cultural heritage. They also participate in a number of practical activities through which they learn about folklore and about different African and Indian cultural forms. In some schools a World Heritage and Cultural ASPnet Kit is used to integrate citizenship education into the curriculum. In the year 2000 representatives from three of the schools involved in these projects participated in an International Youth Forum on Cultural Heritage in New Delhi.
- ***UNESCO Clubs.*** The purpose of these clubs is to encourage people to understand global problems and to work together to solve them in the spirit of solidarity, trust and respect. Initially the clubs existed only in schools, but some of them are now community based. There are 55 clubs in Trinidad and five in Tobago. Members of the club are involved in a number of activities including working with the elderly, and in some schools club activities are being integrated into the curriculum to highlight different aspects of local culture, to teach students different cultural art forms and to develop their creative abilities and showcase their talents.

Non-Formal Programmes

Citizenship education is most often made available through non-formal programmes, and while some of these are provided by the Division of Educational Services in the Ministry of Education, the majority are provided by a variety of NGOs, civic society organisations. At the same time there is a significant amount of collaboration between government, mainly through the Ministry of Education, and NGOs to implement non-formal citizenship education programmes.

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Non-Formal Programmes of the Ministry of Education

The Division of Educational Services provides a number of non-formal programmes that deal with various aspects of citizenship education. Among these are the following.

- ***The Character Caravan*** is implemented jointly with the YWCA. Within this programme a team of actors goes to schools, act out Annancy stories and then use the stories as the basis of discussion and to highlight lessons to be learnt. The idea is to train a group of children in each school to use this approach with different classes throughout the school.
- ***Conscious Parenting*** is a three-year programme jointly sponsored by the Division and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender. It has two components: a call-in radio programme and community meetings held in areas in which there were schools with serious problems. Among the topics covered in this programme are: male and female single parenting, community parenting, discipline, communication, conflict resolution and anger management, substance abuse and the law and the family.
- ***The Schools Intervention Strategies (SIS) Project,*** being piloted in a boys' Grammar School, is one in which drama is used to involve students and their parents in discussion of issues like indiscipline, crime and violence, delinquent behaviour, drug abuse, self-esteem and conflict resolution. It also includes a component on mentoring and involves community police in the process.
- ***Building Stronger, Safer Communities: Together We Light the Way.*** Plans are being made to implement a three-year project that focuses on the responsibility of the communities for rearing their children. The project will be implemented in all secondary schools and in surrounding communities. It will be based on the work of Sandra Deane, a Trinidadian who lives and teaches in Canada and whose work "turned around" a school in which she was teaching. Ms Dean will actually be in Trinidad and will work with the Ministry of Education to develop and implement the project.

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Non-Formal Programmes of Civil Society Organisations

Non-Formal programmes in citizenship education provided by NGOs are many and varied and reach a significant number of individuals and groups including community groups, parents, students and the society at large. Among these are programmes offered by the following groups.

The Trinidad and Tobago Coalition Against Domestic Violence

The main concern of this organisation is about the high level of violence in society. While the main focus of its work is the increase in abuse and violence against women and while most of its programmes are geared to addressing this issue, it is now also involved in a project that includes working in schools. This programme is called:

- ***Peace, Love and Understanding in Schools (PLUS).*** Within this project, funded by a local company, there are three main activities.
    - *A Whole School Pilot Project* that is being implemented over a period of one year in two primary schools, one a government boys' school, the other a co-educational denominational school. It is a prevention programme that involves all stakeholders of the school, including students, teachers, administrative and non-teaching staff and parents. Its aim is to promote and facilitate the all-round development of the child and to provide a safe environment in which children can develop social and emotional skills, and can learn models of behaviour that demonstrate self-discipline, respect for self and others, and non-violent responses to conflict. The project is also seeking to discover what systems and structures need to be in place to ensure a climate of peace, love and understanding in schools and to implement these systems and structures where they do not exist.

      The programme is managed by a co-ordinator, and a facilitator trained in the management of school change is assigned to each school works with the co-ordinator to develop and implement training workshops to train the stakeholders in social and emotional skills. She also assists the school administration in the setting up of systems (where these do not exist) that are necessary to support the

implementation of the skills learned. The programme is evaluated at the end of each term, and adjusted as necessary.

- *A five-hour workshop on Alternative Strategies for Building Classrooms of Peace*. The workshop is based on a humanistic philosophy, and reflects and is specifically related to the local culture and experience. It has been piloted in six schools and with a group of teachers pursuing the Diploma of Education at UWI, St Augustine. The objective of the workshop is to encourage participants to focus on the cognitive, emotional, physical and social needs of the children; to use their knowledge of children's needs to determine the causes of inappropriate behaviour; and to explore alternative, non-punitive approaches to discipline. The content includes the use of corporal punishment in schools and the abolition of corporal punishment, self-discipline, empowerment, responsibility and problem solving. Teachers also carry out an assessment of the cognitive, affective, emotional and social needs of children of different ages from early childhood to teenagers. In the problem-solving session participants work in groups to identify practical discipline problems and the needs that give rise to inappropriate behaviour and then develop strategies to address the needs and to alter the behaviour.

- *Public/Parenting Education*. This programme entitled "Around Again" takes the form of soap opera with recognisable characters and is delivered in three-minute video clips. Issues related to parenting are highlighted and include respect and trust, gender socialisation, verbal and mental abuse of children by parents, self-discipline versus external discipline, and parental responsibilities. The programme is run as a public service by all of the local TV stations. Not only do parents call the co-ordinator and comment on the usefulness of this programme, but children also call and some have requested that the programme be shown "when my father is watching TV".

- *Training Workshops on Anger Management and Conflict Resolution* for police and for teachers.

Working Women for Social Progress

This activist women's group is committed to increase awareness about the obstacles that prevent women from actively contributing to national life, to cultural sovereignty and to building a strong sense of Caribbean identity. Among its many programmes are:

- ***A Community Based Programme: Empowering Women and their Communities through Education.*** This programme is offered through its School of Alternative Education and includes sessions and workshops on non-sexist parenting, anti-racist consciousnesses, feminism for women and for men, and gender issues.

- ***Campaign for Elimination of Violent Teaching Methods in Schools.*** This campaign was run in 1999. Among the activities undertaken were one-day workshops on "Discipline without Violence for Secondary Teachers" delivered to teachers pursuing the Dip Ed Programme at UWI, and workshops on Alternative Discipline held in four communities. A multi-media approach was used to disseminate and reinforce 19 recorded messages. Radio interviews, round-table discussions and a three-part commentary, on "Transforming Education", discussions on a TV programme "Issues Live", and a series of articles in one of the daily newspapers, and distribution of bookmarks were all part of the campaign.

Emancipation Support Committee

This group focuses on the Afro-Trinidadian community and seeks to raise their self-esteem and to increase knowledge and appreciation of their African Heritage and of their contribution to society. Their programmes include:

- ***Exploring Emancipation: A Ten-Week Programme for 11+ Students.*** This programme was implemented in 1997 in a primary girls' school with children who had recently sat the secondary school entrance examination, commonly called the Common Entrance or 11+ Exam. It "filled the gap" between completing the examination and the end of term and provided opportunities for students and teachers to be involved in meaningful activities in a "slack" period. The programme was intended to increase the students' understanding and appreciation of

African History and of the heritage of Afro-Trinidadians, as well as about the different ethnic groups that make up society in Trinidad and Tobago and about their contributions to their society.

Several topics were covered under the two themes of History and Culture. Through a number of creative activities including several cultural forms like drumming, drama, music, song and dance students learnt about ancient Africa, the Slave Trade and slavery, Emancipation and modern African History, and about food, clothing and hairstyles. While the programme achieved its objectives and the tangible outcomes were impressive, it has not yet been implemented in other schools.

- ***Intervention For Education*** is an experimental pilot project being carried out by the Emancipation Committee in three schools. Its aim is to use culture and cultural heritage to improve the academic performance and to develop self-esteem in students.

- ***Youth Flex*** is an education and training programme for "the missing generation", young people of 5-16 years of age who are at risk. It consists of a number of workshops each with 12-15 young people, and it uses African cultural forms and videos as a strategy for sensitising and informing youth and for developing their skills in problem-solving.

- ***Emancipation Day Festival Activities***. These include organising and staging an Emancipation Festival on Emancipation Day in August, a six-week lecture series, seminars and workshops held at the Emancipation Village, a Market and Trade exposition, art and education exhibitions and a street parade on Emancipation Day, all of which focus on and highlight African culture and heritage.

- ***Emancipation Heritage Tours Project***. This project is now being developed and while its goal is to identify, celebrate and share different aspects of the multi-cultural heritage of Trinidad and Tobago, special attention will be paid to African heritage. The project will also provide opportunities for young people who are at risk to gain employment and become productive citizens. Among the activities being planned is the creation of a tourism package that will attract local and overseas visitors and encourage them to visit historical sites around the country. The sites

will include those that will increase understanding of the multi-cultural aspects of the national culture and the tours will include lectures, information packages, drama, and video presentations and will draw on and use the knowledge, experience and talents of people in communities near or in which the heritage sites are located.

During the first year of he project, 30 young people will be trained as tour guides. Training will include general knowledge and history, cultural studies, communication, interpersonal relations, leadership, deportment and personal development. This project is being seen as complementing the formal education system, as a strategy for generating employment for unemployed youth, and as a mechanism for increasing people's respect for and appreciation of all aspects of the national cultural heritage.

SERVOL

SERVOL is a local indigenous development organisation that has been operating for over 30 years. It is concerned with creating productive citizens who display desirable values, attitudes and behaviours. The focus of its programmes is on young people and one of its most important is:

- ***The Adolescent Development Programme***. This three-month programme is the foundation of all SERVOL programmes. It is compulsory and takes the form of an orientation course that precedes the skill-training programme offered to young people. The aim is to help young people to develop self-esteem and self-confidence, to build healthy relationships with God, their peers, adults and small children, to prepare them for their roles as parents, and to equip them to function effectively as healthy and productive citizens. The curriculum focuses on the spiritual, physical, intellectual, cultural and emotional (SPICEs) aspects of human development. In addition to topics such as understanding self, self-awareness, communication, parenting and spirituality, a Social Studies module includes topics on etiquette, culture, nationhood, government, the constitution, festivals, and the environment. Over the years SERVOL has trained over 60,000 young people and it has conducted tracer studies to track some of these.

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The Inter-Religious Organisation

This organisation founded 30 years ago represents all religious faiths and is involved in a number of activities intended to focus on spirituality and to encourage and facilitate the spiritual development of citizens. Among its programmes are:

- implementation and monitoring the teaching of values education in schools
- a live call-in radio programme on Sundays in which an inter-faith panel discusses national issues and responds to questions from individual callers
- a weekly TV programme in which prominent persons are interviewed on current issues and topics
- a National Day of Thanksgiving held on the Sunday before or after Republic Day and in which the President is the main speaker
- conduct of classes in religious studies in schools
- representation on and involvement in various committees and boards including film censorship, the Civic Council, the Community Outreach Team, whose aim is to curb crime in schools, and on a committee to revisit the Concordat of 1961.
- a conference on Values Education in 1998.

The National Baha'i Centre

This organisation is a branch of the international religious organisation whose thrust is moral education, gender equality, rights and responsibilities of citizens, global prosperity and peace. Among the programmes offered by its three agencies is a:

- ***Moral and Values Education Project***. The aim of this project is to increase understanding of the importance of morals and values education in homes, schools and in communities and to explore the impact of

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values, attitudes and behaviour on individuals, community and society as a whole. Topics covered include love, respect, trustworthiness, justice, charity, self-respect and respect for others. Within this project, awareness-building and sensitisation sessions are conducted with particular groups as well as with the public at large. Workshops, seminars and presentations are conducted and made to policy-makers and other individuals and groups in government ministries, to teachers and students in schools and to other NGOs and community groups. Classes are also held for children and young people.

The Civic Council for Social Equity

This comprises representatives of a large number of civic organisations and of local government authorities. One of their main activities is the development and implementation of:

- public education programmes designed to sensitise and to share information on governance and social policy generated by analysis of public policy and governance.

Innovative Approaches

Within many of the citizenship education programmes, a variety of creative and innovative approaches are being used to involve students, parents, young people and communities in a process of reflection and analysis of issues that are of major concern, to identify and discuss desirable values, to explore solutions to problems and to motivate and facilitate behaviour change. Among these are:

Participatory Approaches

In most of the programmes participatory, rather than didactic, approaches and interactive methods are being used to encourage active participation of students and learners in a process of learning and change. In addition, the experiences of the learners/participants are being used as the basis for discussion analysis and reflection on their role as citizens, on the issues that

affect them and on the problems that they face. Interactive methods engage learners in a process of problem-solving, anger management and conflict resolution.

Cultural Forms

In several programmes, drama, including skits and role-play, is often used to highlight issues, to identify problems, to explore solutions, and to increase understanding of situations and to identify and analyse the reasons for inappropriate behaviours.

The use of stories, more especially Annancy stories, part of the oral tradition, is another cultural form that is being used to teach values and to help children to learn important lessons about appropriate behaviour. Music, drumming, song, dance and poetry are also used in some programmes.

Mock Trials

One strategy being used to address the increase in indiscipline and violence in schools and among young people is the staging of "mock trials". The theme of the trials is "Youth Indiscipline and the Long Arm of the Law". The objective is to inform students about, and to provide them with, an actual experience of the law and how it works, and the implications of becoming involved in crime and other illegal activities. The trials are also intended to provide opportunities for teachers to discuss the problems and to explore ways of dealing with them. To date trials have been held in schools in which there is a high level of indiscipline, violence and crime, and have dealt with cases of date rape, weapons and drugs.

Each school involved in the project sends its ten most delinquent students to participate, "real court people", police, lawyers, prosecutors and defenders, court clerks and magistrates conduct the trials, and young people who were previously involved in crime give testimonies. The trials are conducted during the morning. In the afternoon students participate in small group discussions on the issues, teachers listen to panel presentations and discuss strategies for dealing with delinquent students as well as with the issues; and

both groups then report in a plenary session. On returning to their schools, students and teachers are then expected to report on the exercise. There are plans to evaluate this strategy later this year.

Audio-Visuals and The Electronic Media

Videos and the "soap opera" format used in TV presentations have been successful in highlighting issues relating to the various roles that citizens have to play as parents, teachers and community members, for identifying the challenges that confront them and the problems they face as they attempt to perform their various multiple roles. Radio programmes, posters and other print materials are also being used to draw attention to, and stimulate discussions on, issues that affect citizens. Response to these methods has been positive and it appears that they have stimulated a great deal of interest.

Resource Material

The investigation not only revealed that there is a significant amount of written material on citizenship education, but also that some of it has been written and produced by local authors and is being used in several programmes. Among these are booklets on democracy, morals and values, guidebooks for teachers and study books. Official documents like the Constitution, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Charter of Human Rights, along with CDs, records, and videos are also used. In addition, individuals and organisations develop their own teaching and resource material as necessary.

Outcomes and Impact of Citizenship Education Programmes

While some activities, like individual training workshops for teachers, are evaluated by the participants on completion, to a large extent the organisations that are providing citizenship education have not developed a system to monitor and evaluate their programmes on a regular basis.

Therefore the information that they provided on outcomes and impact are based on ad hoc observation, feedback from participants and from noticeable changes in attitudes or behaviour of individuals.

Among the outcomes listed were:

- increased awareness
- improved self-esteem
- better interpersonal relations
- recognition of the need to accept different cultural values and practices, and of the need to co-exist harmoniously
- better understanding of the challenges facing citizens in a multi-ethnic, multicultural society
- greater tolerance
- attitudinal change
- a better understanding of the factors that affect citizens as they attempt to perform their various roles and of the knowledge and skills needed to perform these roles effectively, and
- a better understanding of the socio-economic issues facing young people.

In addition, the programmes have provided opportunities for participants to discuss issues about which they are concerned, like indiscipline, erosion of values, crime and violence, and to explore ways of dealing with these. There is also a growing recognition and acceptance of the need to focus on morals and values education.

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Chapter 4: Themes, Trends and Issues

An analysis of the data collected on the questionnaires, gathered during interviews and meetings, and generated during the Search Conference reveals several themes that are the focus of citizenship education programmes, some emerging trends and some key issues that still need to be addressed.

Themes

Analysis of the data shows that concerns about a number of issues have resulted in some themes appearing in several programmes. Among these are themes that relate to the individual as a citizen such as identity, rights and responsibilities of citizens, non-violence and peace, and themes that relate to the wider society like culture, nationhood, democracy, and governance.

A major concern to those who participated in the study was the breakdown and erosion of core universal values and the effect of this on individual attitudes and behaviour and on the type of citizen that exist. It was the general opinion that the absence of values like respect, tolerance, honesty, absence of a sense of responsibility and commitment was responsible for low self-esteem, indiscipline, poor interpersonal relations and high levels of intolerance, and for the increase in corruption, crime and violence. Morals and values was therefore a major theme in nearly all the programmes examined.

In addition concerns about the individuals as citizens, about the type of society they live in, about whether they understand their various roles, and about the societal factors that determine and affect how well they play these roles, resulted in themes like nationhood, government and governance, democracy, and culture being dealt with in several of the programmes. In relation to the latter, there was a major concern about the development of a culture characterised by an increase in violence and crime and about a society in which these activities were becoming the norm. Within this context there was a particular concern about the level of violence being witnessed in schools. Consequently a great deal of emphasis was being put on "Changing the Culture of the Classroom" and on developing and

encouraging peaceful environments and these were major themes in programmes being implemented in schools.

By focusing on these themes, citizenship education programmes provided opportunities for participants not only to examine themselves, to understand their roles and responsibilities as citizens, and to learn about their society and how it is governed and operates; but they also enabled them to understand the relationship between the individuals in the society and between them and the society in which they live.

Trends

Among the many programmes examined there were several noticeable trends. Among these were the whole school approach, changing the culture of the classroom, involvement of parents and communities in citizenship education programmes, innovative and creative approaches and collaboration between government and NGOs.

The whole school approach is one that is being used in the moral and values education project to infuse values into every aspect of the life and operations of the school, to create peaceful and nurturing environments and to explore alternative non-violent approaches to punishment. It is also being used in the two schools involved in the PLUS programme and in some of the schools involved in the ASPnet project and in which there are UNESCO Clubs, it is being used to integrate the activities of these projects into the school curriculum.

It was generally recognised that teachers of children and facilitators of adults have a critical role in shaping future citizens, in demonstrating "good citizenship" and in modelling and teaching desirable, appropriate and acceptable values, attitudes and behaviours. Those who participated in this study reiterated this and participants at the Search Conference were of the view that it was critical to focus on teachers in order to prepare and equip them to "teach" citizenship education and to model good citizenship practices.

From the information collected it is clear that there is a teacher-training component in many of the citizenship education programmes being offered, and that some teachers and facilitators have opportunities to participate in training workshops and sessions. Here they are exposed to philosophies and concepts that underlie and inform citizenship education, and to approaches and methodologies that will lead to learning and change in attitudes and behaviour. They also acquire and develop a wide range of skills including skills in alternative approaches to discipline, in anger management, conflict resolution, and in developing instructional materials.

There is a growing recognition among providers of citizenship education programmes that parents and other adults in the society have an important role to play in the development of children and young people, and in determining the kind of citizens that they will become. It is also important that these adults also be made aware of their responsibilities in performing this and other roles as citizens. Another trend is the inclusion and active participation of parents and communities in citizenship education programmes and the existence of activities that are designed to promote, encourage and facilitate their involvement in this process.

A variety of innovative and creative approaches, including multi-media approaches are being used in citizenship education programmes. They are effective in creating and maintaining interest as well as in reaching diverse groups and a wider audience. In addition, they are also an important mechanism for using the many diverse cultural forms to facilitating learning and they increase the recognition and valuing of the rich cultural heritage of the country.

Collaboration between government and civil society organisations is now being recognised as important to achieving national goals. It is vital, therefore, that citizenship education must not be seen as being only the business of government agencies like the Ministry of Education, but that it must be undertaken by all societal institutions.

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Collaboration between government agencies and NGOs is a common feature in several citizenship education programmes. It has several advantages, including that the experience and perspective of different individuals and groups in the society can be integrated into citizenship education programmes, that the programmes can be based on the experience and can address the concerns and meet the needs of particular groups in the society, and that maximum use can be made of scarce resources. It also has the potential to lead to better co-ordination of programmes and to prevent gaps, duplication, and overlapping.

Issues

Participants in the study identified a large number of issues that were currently being addressed, some that were being addressed but not in enough depth, and others that were not being addressed at all. The issues identified may be grouped into those that relate to individuals as citizens and those that relate to the wider society and those relating to citizenship education programmes.

Issues Related to the Individual as Citizen

These included values, identity, inequalities, and citizenship and the good citizen.

Values

All the providers of citizens education programmes seem to agree that values are important and they are either the main focus or they are included as a topic in most of the programmes. There was also general agreement that good citizenship is based on acceptance and adherence to a set of core universal values, as well as specific values that are of relevance to a particular country or society. In a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious society like Trinidad and Tobago the latter take on special significance. It was felt that it was important to recognise that values held by people from different ethnic groups may be different, and the example given to validate this was the value of thrift held by Indo-Trinidadians. It was also

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pointed out that values held by individuals in a rural school or community may be different from those held by individuals in an urban school or community, and that those held by citizens of African descent may be different from those held by citizens of East Indian descent.

Several people expressed concern about the existence of materialistic values and thought that too much emphasis was being placed on money, that there was a lot in the society that is reinforcing "wrong values and inappropriate behaviour". They cited immorality, growing levels of intolerance, lack of respect for others and for authority, all contributing to the increase in violence and crime. There is scant recognition of, and attention given to, rights and responsibilities, and they stressed the need to accept and adopt principles of "right action".

Identity, Difference and Diversity

In the multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-cultural society of Trinidad and Tobago, issues of identity, difference and diversity are critical and need to be addressed. According to one respondent, "We are a deeply divided people" and the media reinforces this divisiveness. Moreover, the hostility towards and the tensions that exist between different groups in the society are the result of perceived status of one or other ethnic group, and on the perception that they have opportunities and derive benefits because of belonging to a particular ethnic group and the negative stereotypes and attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups.

The challenge is to strive for unity in diversity and to build a nation out of the ethnic and cultural diversity. However, it was pointed out that for individuals to develop and feel a sense of belonging to one nation more emphasis must be put on developing a "national identity" rather than on ethnicity. In addition, it was felt that the concept of national identity should be infused into the school curriculum. In this regard it was suggested that it was important to document the cultural heritage of each group, to teach history so that it is sensitive to difference, and to recognise and value the contributions of each group to the society.

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However, it appears that issues of identity, difference and diversity are not being addressed in any depth in citizenship education programmes. For example, when asked what is the ethnic composition of the group/class involved in the programme and whether there was any difference in how individuals from different ethnic groups participated and responded, the response was "we don't differentiate, we treat everybody as equal". This comment suggests a low level of consciousness about and sensitivity to difference and a certain lack of understanding of the importance of valuing difference and diversity and of addressing these issues in citizenship education programmes. The implications of this were well captured in a comment made by two of the participants in the small group discussion during the Search Conference, that understanding and valuing difference will affect "the way in which you engage 'the other' and will determine the choreography of the relationship".

Inequalities

"We have learnt to accept inequalities and to believe that you cannot change inequality". This statement by one of the respondents captures the concern expressed by several others. Among the inequalities identified and about which concern was expressed were those based on ethnicity, gender, those resulting from the socio-economic situation and those found in the education system.

In a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society many opportunities exist for inequalities among citizens from different ethnic groups at all levels of society. Some of those that were identified were opportunities and benefits especially in relation to politics and employment, and attendance and participation of children from different races in the school system.

In relation to gender several issues were identified. In the view of some, gender inequalities exist because the civic rights of women are neither well known nor accepted by many. In addition there was a concern that the development needs of boys are not being adequately met by the education system, that violence among males in school is higher than among females

and that males and females fight for different reasons. Examples were given to illustrate that fights among males tend to be about gaining rank and prestige, improving self-esteem and proving manhood, while females are more likely to engage in verbal battles to solve problems. These views expressed by respondents are similar to research findings on the subject. At the same time, there is a growing concern about the increase in the number of female students that are displaying violent behaviour, that are using violence, including weapons, as a strategy to solve problems and to resolve conflict, and that are becoming involved in criminal activity.

At another level, experience in a youth development programme drew attention to the fact that, while many young female teachers in a youth development programme were motivated to go on to higher education, their male counterparts were not; that males were not attracted to teaching in the programme because "men wouldn't want to work for such a low salary", and that while young female trainees were willing to accept a weekend job for what was considered a "low" wage, her male counterpart remarked that "that ain't no money to work for" and apparently would choose not to work rather than to accept what he considered to be a low wage. These examples have serious implications for male and female citizens as workers and producers.

Several gender issues including gender socialisation and gender roles and relations in the family have also emerged in the video clips from the parenting programme "Around Again". Discussion of these issues is proving to be important in helping male and female citizens understand their roles as partners and parents, and the implications for male-female relationships.

However, a gender analysis of the citizenship education programmes identified and reviewed shows that gender and issues of gender are conspicuously absent and are not directly addressed in any of them. This appears to be true of programmes that are being offered to children and young people and adults, as well as in teacher training programmes. Gender training programmes for teachers and facilitators are essential in order to sensitise them to gender issues, to introduce them to gender concepts, to provide opportunities for them to identify and examine their own gender

biases and to understand how these determine how they interact and deal with male and female students, and to enable them to integrate gender into citizenship education programmes as well as into all aspects of the curriculum.

Insights into issues relating to inequity and inequality in the education system emerge from a research project undertaken among secondary school students in 1992 and the findings of which are still relevant today. The issues relate mainly to ethnicity and gender. Among them are the large numbers of African and Indian students who are not attending school, the low scores of students of African descent compared with those of other races, some degree of unfairness in placements of students in different types, especially in traditional "grammar" schools. In addition, there is a concern about the existence of a number of students who are at risk, including young people of African descent, especially females, students from poor homes, from single parent and from no parent homes, and those who live in rural areas.

The representative of the Emancipation Committee who participated in the Search Conference raised some of these issues and registered his deep concern about the fate and the future of significant numbers of children and young people of African descent who appear not to be benefiting from the education system.

It was felt that these and other inequalities were contributing to many of the existing social problems and that there was a need to see these issues as national issues that are affecting all, and are of concern to all citizens.

Citizenship and the "good" Citizen

There was a great deal of discussion about citizenship, about what it is and about what it means to be a good citizen. Concern was expressed about the paucity of examples of good citizenship at the level of the political directorate, and in leaders and in decision-makers at the national level, and since according to one respondent "we are a nation of sheep", it is important to have "good" models to emulate.

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It was pointed out that in addition to seeing citizens as parents and teachers it was important to see the them as workers, as producers, as consumers, as political agents, as social actors and as change agents. It was also seen as important to create a learning environment in which individuals can acquire the knowledge and develop the skills that they need to perform their roles effectively, and to expose them to education that would empower rather than domesticate them.

However, while it was seen as important to continue to strive to create good citizens, there was also a concern that "we have not identified or described the kind of citizen that we want to create". It was generally recognised that the social studies does include modules that inform students about the characteristics of a good citizen, but participants in the small group discussion in the Search Conference suggested that CARICOM's "Ideal Citizen" should also be studied as it identifies some of the characteristics of an ideal Caribbean citizen.

Issues Related to the Society

These included democracy and governance, macro-economic issues, social issues, and issues related to education.

Democracy and Governance

The principles of a democratic society flow from a set of core, generic universal values, but according to some, democracy is not working because while there are elements of democracy present, the society is not democratic. Power and resources are concentrated in an elite and there are systems and structures that enable the elite to maintain power.

There was concern the low level of citizens' participation in political processes and the need for change to political systems and to organise political education programmes to educate citizens about the constitution, about governance and about their role in these processes. It was also felt that

national policies should be re-examined and that citizens' fora should be organised to give citizens the opportunity to discuss them and to give policy-makers the opportunity to consult with and to listen to citizens' suggestions about what should be changed.

Socio-Economic Issues

Questions were raised about how phenomena like globalisation and trade liberalisation, and national issues like unemployment, loss of jobs, and the present political impasse affect citizens. The socio-economic realities that result from unequal distribution of wealth and lack of access to and control over resources have a negative impact on citizens. Among the issues identified that were associated with these phenomena are the emergence of two groups: the Patriarchs, who are committed to keeping the money in the hands of a few, and the "new poor" whose earnings are insufficient to provide them with an acceptable standard of living. Increasing levels of poverty and of unemployment among youth are also critical issues that can affect individuals' ability to be "good citizens".

Another concern of all is the increasing level of indiscipline and the tendency to see violence as the first, or only response to problem-solving and conflict resolution. According to one respondent, evidence of this can be seen in the fact that 2 per cent of the school population was suspended for violent behaviour, and in the year 2000-2001 there were over 800 cases of violent behaviour, including hitting, fighting and the use of weapons, by students in secondary schools.

The Education System

There was a general belief that education was an effective strategy for creating good citizens and promoting good citizenship. However, several people were of the view that the education system is based on an ideology and is structured in such a way that the focus is on teacher specialisation and academic performance; and that there is a preoccupation with allocating status and rewards based on cognitive rather than on emotional and social learning or on character development. Consequently, because of the heavy

focus on passing examinations and on getting certificates, subjects like citizenship, morals and values that are non-examinable are given less attention by students as well as by teachers. In addition, students are rewarded for academic performance but not for good character or appropriate behaviour.

It was also felt that because the education system is mechanistic it is dehumanising and because the culture of the classroom is not democratic, it does not reflect or demonstrate desirable values like respect for others and for authority and does not facilitate good relationships. It is therefore important to identify, highlight and replicate examples of "good teaching and good practice" and to find spaces within which to intervene in order to initiate change. At the same time, because there has been a breakdown in the formal education system it was felt that non-formal and informal education was needed to fill the gaps; and it was pointed out that because cultural expression is at the core of informal learning, more serious attempts should be made to use all aspects of the diverse cultural forms to facilitate learning about how to be a good citizen.

Issues Related to Citizenship Education Programme

These related to the policy, content, delivery and evaluation of programmes.

Policy

Comments were made about the absence of a policy on citizenship education and about the fact that "everybody was doing their own thing". This could well be one of the factors that has contributed to an ad hoc, unco-ordinated approach to overlap and duplication and to the existence of "gaps" and to issues that are not being adequately addressed. While existing citizenship education programmes are addressing issues related to good citizenship, a policy would provide a philosophical framework that would ensure that all programmes were not only based on universal values, but that they would also reflect national values that are appropriate and relevant to the local context and that address issues of concern to all citizens and would promote and facilitate the creation of good citizens.

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Content

On the whole, people seemed to be satisfied with what is being covered in citizenship education programmes, though there seems to be a need for more balance in the weight given and the time allocated to the various topics that are being covered. At the same time there are some programmes in which certain topics are not covered at all.

Delivery

Again there seemed to be a general feeling that the approaches and methods, especially the innovative and creative ones were very effective. However, one issue that surfaced several times was the importance of using cultural forms to communicate and reinforce positive messages about the richness and value of diversity and for the transmission of desirable values.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It was recognised that there is a significant amount of citizenship education taking place but there was also a concern about the lack of a coherent policy, the lack of co-ordination and the absence of any systematic evaluation of the many programmes. Questions were raised about its outcomes, effect and impact and there was a feeling that in spite of "so many doing so much for so long, the society seemed so much worse that it was ten years ago." These observations raised the issue about the need for a national policy, for a mechanism to co-ordinate efforts, and for a system to assess and measure the impact of citizenship education programmes. Some of the indicators suggested included observation of behaviour on the street, adherence to school rules and respect for law and order, respect for the environment, practice of justice and fair play in personal encounters and in business.

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Chapter 5: An Action Agenda for the Future

All of those who participated in the study had ideas about what needs to be done, about what actions should be taken and about what activities should be undertaken to promote good citizenship, to create good citizens and to expand and implement citizenship education programmes in Trinidad and Tobago. The following are based on their suggestions and recommendations as well as on those of the consultant.

- A national consultation on citizenship should be organised to bring together all stakeholders, including all those who participated in this study, students, young people and policy- and decision-makers, representatives from government and civil society organisations and other stakeholders, to discuss issues related to citizenship in Trinidad and Tobago and to seek to arrive at some consensus about citizenship and the good citizen.
- here needs to be a greater focus on the youth and therefore a more in-depth study on the topic should be undertaken in schools and with young people.
- The creation of more mechanisms to advance and continue the dialogue begun in the Search Conference and to facilitate the sharing of information and experience.
- Identification and documentation of some existing citizenship education programmes as "cases" to highlight content, innovative approaches and outcomes.
- Preparation of a compendium of citizenship education programmes that provides details of each existing programme and gives information about the providers.
- Preparation of a list of materials being used in citizenship education programmes and reproduction and dissemination of some of these so that they are available to a wider audience.
- A programme to sensitise policy-makers and leaders and to expose them and to provide them with the opportunity to discuss philosophies and concepts and explore strategies for formulation of national polices and

programmes that will infuse core universal/Commonwealth values as well as those of particular relevance to Trinidad and Tobago into all societal institutions and processes.

- Use the technology to organise "satellite conferences" on the topic/aspects of the topic across the Commonwealth.
- Review and record programmes that are being organised for teachers and facilitators in citizenship education programmes and use these to develop a comprehensive training programme for teachers and facilitators.
- Identify and list individuals who are currently involved, and who would like to be involved in citizenship education programmes and expose them to a comprehensive programme of training.
- Encourage and facilitate the development of a monitoring and evaluation system to measure and assess the outcomes, effect and impact of citizenship education programmes.

Appendix 1: References

A Study of the Secondary School Population: Placement Patterns and Practices: A Research Report, The Centre for Ethnic Studies, UWI, St Augustine.

Report of the Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO, 2000 – 2001.

Trinidad and Tobago National Report February 1994, World Summit for Social Development 1995.

Trinidad and Tobago: Poverty and Unemployment in an Oil Based Economy, Vol. 1 May 24 1995, The World Bank.

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Appendix 2: Participants at the Search Conference

Mr David Abdullah	Education Officer, Oilfield Workers' Trade Union
Ms Judy Alleyne-Wilson	Civic Council for Social Equity
Ms Doreen Anderson	Co-ordinator, Office of External Affairs, Baha'i Community of Trinidad and Tobago
Mr Lennox Bernard	Tutor, School of Continuing Studies, UWI, St Augustine
Ms Denise Bobb	Chief Operations Officer, Coalition against Domestic Violence
Mr Carlisle Branker	Curriculum Officer, Ministry of Education
Mr Clifford Bullock	Curriculum Co-ordinator, Ministry of Education
Ms Ayana Dardaine	Outreach Co-ordinator, Child Line
Ms Aurea Honore	Curriculum Officer, Ministry of Education
Mr Eugene Joseph	Curriculum Officer 111, Ministry of Education
Mr Kafra Kambon	Chairman, Emancipation Committee
Mr Sabaka Kanbon	Postgraduate student, UWI
Mr Rupert King	Executive Co-ordinator, Training, SERVOL
Ms Jennifer Lavia	Executive Director, Caribbean Institute for Research and Professional Education
Mr Harry Persad Maharaj	Secretary, Inter-religious Organisation
Ms Cheryl McKenzie Cook	Co-ordinator, PLUS Programme, TT Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Mr Philip Murray	Documentation Officer, TT National Commission for UNESCO
Ms Marcia Riley	Secretary General for the Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO
Dr Emmanuel Senah	Project Officer for Morals and Values Education, Ministry of Education

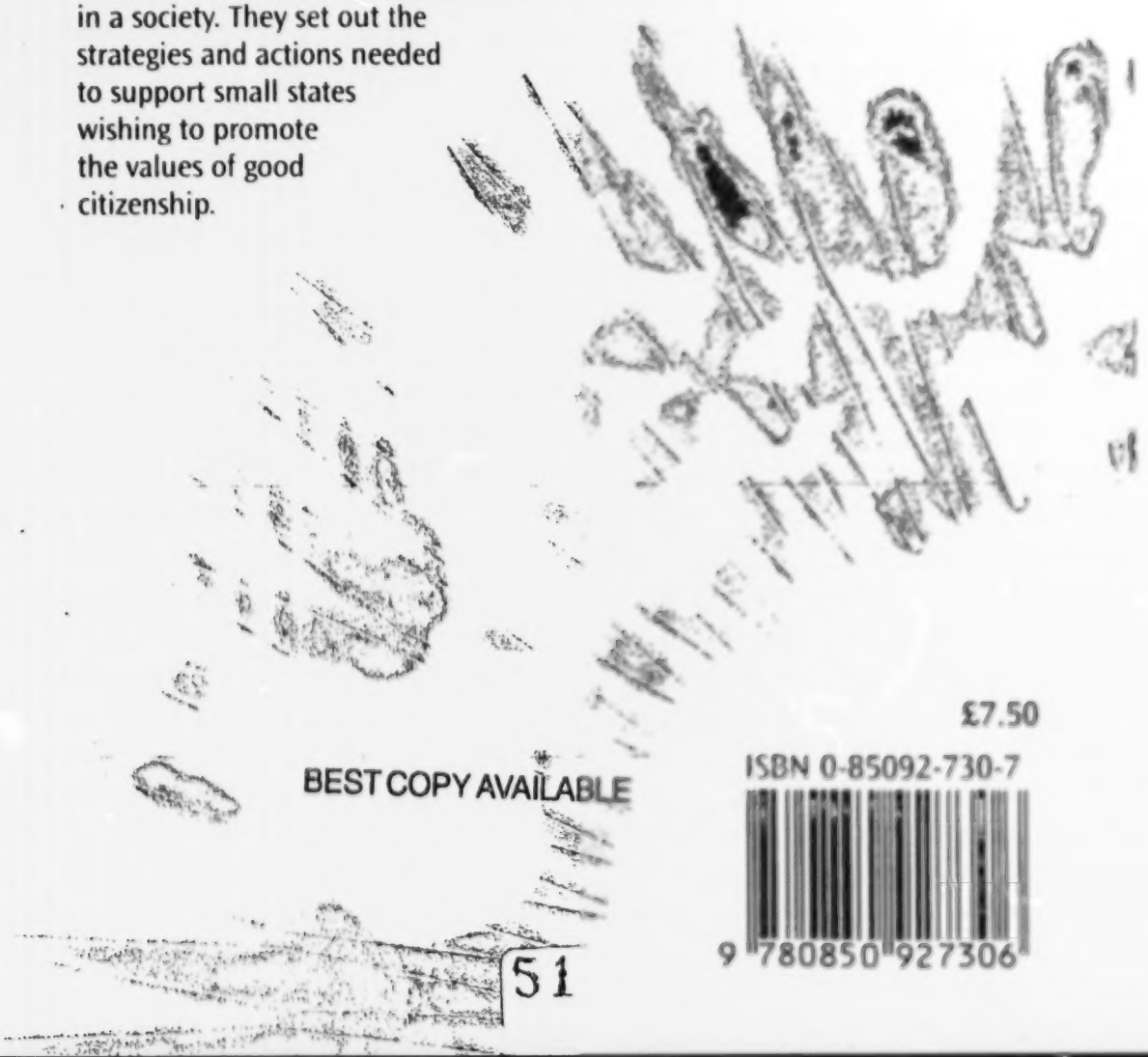
Citizenship Education in Small States

Trinidad and Tobago

Identity and diversity in all its forms present major challenges to countries seeking to best equip citizens with the skills to participate effectively in their diverse societies.

The project on Citizenship education in the Commonwealth is one of the follow-up activities being undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat in response to a mandate from Commonwealth Heads of Government and Ministers of Education. It is a component of the Secretariat's education programme which focuses on values education (examining ways in which values are transmitted in society).

These books focus on the outcomes of this project in the respective countries, providing valuable insights into the strengthening of values in a society. They set out the strategies and actions needed to support small states wishing to promote the values of good citizenship.



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